

Remarks

In the action, objection was made to the drawings; claims 1-7 were rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph; claims 7, 9, 11-14, 45, 47, 49-59 and 61-62 were rejected as being unpatentable over Santandrea et al.

Drawing Objection

The objection to the drawings is respectfully traversed. The action asserts that the pivot arms of claim 1 and gripping arms of claim 6 are not shown in the drawings. However, exemplary pivot arms are shown as item 160 in Figs. 6 and 8 with a pivot point shown at 162. Similarly, exemplary gripping arms are shown at 134 in Figs. 5 and 6 and at 220 in Fig. 11. Withdrawal of the objection is therefore requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC 112

Claim 1 has been amended above as suggested by the examiner. Accordingly, the 112 rejection is believed to be overcome with respect to claims 1-6, placing such claims in condition for allowance as indicated in the action.

Applicant respectfully submits that claim 7 meets the requirements of section 112, second paragraph. In particular, step (b) defines a conveying step and the last clause of claim 7 requires that such conveying be performed by automated machinery. Withdrawal of the objection to claim 7 is therefore requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC 103

The rejection of claims 7, 9, 11-14, 45, 47, 49-59 and 61-62 were rejected as being unpatentable over Santandrea et al. is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 7, 45 and 56 are directed to the same invention, namely an automated stator winding method using a transport pallet with a winding pallet thereon and a stator part mounted on the winding pallet. Claim 56 is the broadest of these independent claims. The winding pallet is separated from the transport pallet and moved into a winding position, a winding operation is performed at the winding position and then the winding pallet is placed back on the transport pallet. The only distinction between claims 7, 45 and 56 is the relative breadth of the claims.

The action asserts that Santandrea et al. '623 "disclose a two pallet operation for winding a stator keying from a conveyor queue." Applicants respectfully disagree. In particular, the '623 patent is directed to a standard pallet in combination with a workpiece holder that is adapted to fixture at least two different types of stators. The workpiece holder

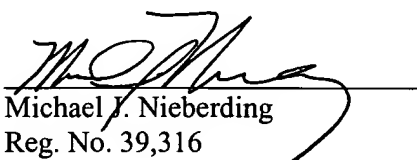
includes body part 9 for holding a first stator type and body part 10 for holding a second stator type. If the workpiece holder is going to fixture a first stator type it engages on the pallet in one orientation (body part 9 facing up and body part 10 facing down), and if the workpiece holder is going to fixture a second stator type the workpiece holder is flipped so as to engage the pallet in an opposite orientation (body part 10 facing up and body part 9 facing down). A mechanism for removing the workpiece holder from the pallet, flipping it, and returning it to the pallet is provided (see primarily Figs. 3 and 4). However, such a flipping operation would certainly not take place while a stator part is fixtured in the workpiece holder, but only when the device needs to be reconfigured to accept a different stator type. Moreover, a thorough review of the '623 patent demonstrates that there is no teaching or suggestion for performing a winding operation on a stator fixtured in the workpiece holder by removing the workpiece holder from the pallet 1, performing the winding operation and then returning the workpiece holder to the pallet. The sole purpose of removing the workpiece holder from the pallet as taught in the '623 patent is to reorient the workpiece holder to receive a different stator type.

For these reasons, each of pending independent claims 7, 45 and 56 are patentably distinguishable over the '623 patent, and withdrawal of the rejection of such claims is requested. All claims that depend from claims 7, 45 and 56 are likewise patentable.

Conclusion

Based upon the foregoing, applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. If the examiner wishes to discuss any aspect of this paper, please contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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